PIPA ADVISER

ISSUE #37

For members of the Property Investment Professionals of Australia

Rental crisis worsens

as more investors exit the market

QPIA PROFILE: CATE BAKOS
Recently elected as the PIPA Chair

WELLBEING
Investing in Yourself: Preventing Burnout in the Property Sector

MARKET UPDATE
Rate cuts and incentives ignite property surge across Australia

TECHNOLOGY
AI and Technology: The quiet enablers of business success

PROPERTY INVESTMENT PROFESSIONALS OF AUSTRALIA PIPA

PIPA **mission:**

PIPA has been formed by industry practitioners with the objective of representing and raising the professional standards of all operators involved in property investment.

Contents

ISSUE #37

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www.pipa.asn.au

CHAIR
Cate Bakos

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Richard Crabb, Matthew Hughes, Veronica Morgan, Mike Mortlock, Richie Muir & Lachlan Vidler.

CONTACT US
Level 3, 478 Georg Street,
Sydney, NSW 2000
T 02 7205 0700

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRES
T 02 7205 0700
E membership@pipa.asn.au

EDITORS
Bricks & Mortar Media
E enquiry@bricksandmortarmedia.com.au

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Luisa Di Girolamo
E luisadigi@gmail.com

I'm honoured to take on the role as Chair. I'd like to share my appreciation for Lachlan Vidler's commitment in the role previously, and we are thrilled to have Lachlan remain on the board. Our board is an impressive group of individuals, who's support of the organisation is unwavering. The appointment of our GM has been a turning point for PIPA. Matt has the experience and focus for driving the industry association well, and the clarity he's bought to our strategic plans is impressive.

We have three pillars we're focusing on; advocacy (stakeholder management, media, government), membership deliverables, and education. Upgrading and updating the QPIA is at the top of our list as our flagship course. Growing our membership base and recognising the diverse strengths and qualifications of our members remains a priority. New

opportunities for member interaction are currently in planning. Continued collaboration with our close industry associations will drive our message stronger, and I look forward sharing some of these new initiatives with our membership soon

Cate Bakos

PIPA Chair

Embracing new horizons together!

What a year – and what a conference! With more than 130 attendees and 25 incredible speakers, this year's event was our biggest yet and a real celebration of the passion and professionalism that defines our industry. The energy in the room reminded me why PIPA exists — to bring people together, share ideas, and push our profession forward.

There's so much opportunity ahead for PIPA. While we'll have more chances to connect before year's end, 2026 is shaping up to be a milestone year. We're preparing to launch our new website, member portal, and an expanded program of events and education. The property sector has long been part of my world — through family, business, and many years in industry bodies that included property. I'm genuinely excited to work with Cate as our new Chair; she brings passionate, proven experience and deep recognition from our members, having received numerous awards and as a proud QPIA.

Cate is joined by a strong board leadership team of Richard Crabb (Vice-Chair), Mike Mortlock (Treasurer) and Richie Muir (Company Secretary) together with Veronica Morgan, who will be taking on leading our Advocacy and External Affairs, Matthew Hughes, as the chair of our new program committee, and Lachan Vidler who will continue to play a key role across education and programs, which are pivotal to the future of PIPA. The future is bright for PIPA — and this is just the beginning.

Matt Monaghan
General Manager

Message from the editors

According to the national market update in this edition, Australia's property market is surging, fuelled by interest rate cuts and expanded government schemes.

Buyer and investor confidence is rebounding nationwide, with strong activity in affordable and lifestyle-driven regions.

Sydney, Melbourne, and Southeast Queensland lead the charge, while Perth and Adelaide remain standout performers. Tasmania and the ACT are showing renewed stability, bolstered by infrastructure investment and population growth.

The First Home Guarantee expansion is clearly intensifying competition, especially in entry-level brackets, but despite affordability challenges, structural undersupply and lifestyle appeal are driving sustainable growth.

Also in this issue, we take a deep dive in the 2025 PIPA Annual Investor Sentiment Survey which found that Australia's rental market is under mounting pressure as a record number of property investors exit the sector, driven by rising costs, legislative uncertainty, and concerns over proposed federal tax reforms.

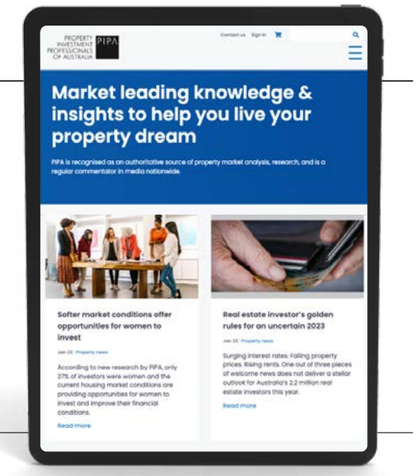
The survey found that 16.7% of investors sold at least one property in the past year – up from 14.1% last year and 12.1% in 2023.

Also in this edition, we discuss how to prevent burnout as well as how technology is quietly enabling business success.

PIPA Adviser Editors
Kieran & Nicola

In the news

PIPA is a regular commentator and expert source in property-related stories across the nation. Below are a selection of articles from recent months. For more articles visit the PIPA website.



Hotspotting by Ryder

The 10 "hottest" property markets around the nation revealed

The "hottest" property markets in the nation have been revealed with three states featuring all of the top performers, according to new exclusive research and analysis.

Read the article

II-A INSURANCE INSIGHTS AUSTRALIA

Safeguarding Property Businesses Against Cyber Threats

Examining the risks, responsibilities, and the role of insurance in protecting client trust.

Read the article

THE VOICE OF TASMANIA MERCURY

Hobart Rents Soaring

Two out of every three Hobart suburbs have higher rents now than they did three months ago. And one suburb, Berriedale, registered one of the largest price rises in Australia – up 10 per cent.

Read the article

PIPA welcomes our newest members...

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

- ANDREW BLACK, *Fundamental Invest*
- BRIAN TAYLOR , *Home Equities*

CORPORATE MEMBERS

- DARREN VENTER, *The Investors Agency*
- DOUGAL WILLIAMS, *Money Sense Lending*
- LACHLAN DELAHUNTY, *Follio Pty Ltd*

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- BRIAN TAYLOR , *Home Equities*
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- ANDREW BLACK , *Fundamental Invest*

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PROPERTY INVESTMENT PROFESSIONALS OF AUSTRALIA PIPA

Cate Bakos

Cate Bakos has been a buyer's agent for more than 15 years, was recently elected as the PIPA Chair, and used to be work with explosive chemicals which, just like property investment advice, can be unforgiving.

Q Can you please tell us more about your business Cate Bakos Property?

We are a small, boutique business located in Melbourne's inner west, and I've been a buyer's agent for 15 years. Our clients' experience is with an on-the-ground, local professional who knows the suburbs and all of their quirks inside and out.

My focus on investment advisory has always underpinned my work, and the increasing requests from owner-occupiers suggested I needed to cater for both home-finders and investors.

These days, we look after both categories of clients in a 50/50 capacity, both enjoying the emotional journey with our owner-occupiers, and assisting investors with the various metrics and challenges of the investment opportunities that property provides.

My support team are amazing, with team members clocking a decade in our business. Many of our google reviews cite the team, and for good reason. My all-female crew have an incredible attention to detail and a fabulous ability to relate to each client on a personal level.

We cover beyond Melbourne, with a particular strength in the Geelong and Ballarat markets.

My previous experience as a mortgage broker, a selling agent, and a chemist have held me in good stead as an analytical advisor with strong industry-related experience.

I consider my four years in the finance industry as one of the best apprenticeships. From lending policy to tax deductibility, cash flow calculations to future wealth projections, and in particular; knowing what banks don't like... these skills have enabled me to guide clients with lender knowledge and a high level of risk mitigation.

> "**Local professional who knows the suburbs** and all of their quirks inside and out.

Q How long have you been a property investment professional and what were your pathways into the profession (incl. other careers)?

I gained my QPIA back in 2012 during my directorship with another firm. I made the leap into the property industry in 2003. It was an enormously brave step, but that pivot helped me find my true calling.

My honours degree in science with a chemistry major wasn't a waste of time, but I do recall the days in the lab, wondering how I ended up there when commercial adventures interested me more.

Analysis in chemistry is quite black and white. I worked with explosive chemicals, and they were unforgiving if I made any mistakes. Property advisory can be like that too, and the requirement to cross-check and run strict systems hasn't been lost on me.

Looking back, the move was a gutsy one, but many of our members have great stories to tell about their career transitions, too. I'm one of many with an interesting story to tell.

Q Please also tell us a little about your own personal property investment history.

My first property purchase was at age 21. My husband and I have amassed a property portfolio over the past 20 years together and our combined skillsets have been a powerful combination.

He has a trade background, and we've managed many renovations over the years. Our portfolio spans four states and includes commercial assets also.

Q What are some of the reasons why you originally decided to join PIPA and complete the

> My outlook for my business is to **remain small and boutique, and to be the best.**

Qualified Property Investment Adviser training program?

I appreciate the recognition and the rigour of the QPIA, but more importantly, I wanted to supplement my advisory skills at the time.

Being a part of the PIPA community not only enables me to mix with my tribe but also enables me to give back something to this industry that has given me so much.

Q You were elected to the PIPA Board of Directors as a volunteer in early 2024 and were recently elected as the PIPA Chair. What would you like to achieve during your tenure and why do you think it's important to give back to the profession?

I want to bring a higher level of awareness to our sector and our organisation. Our board has achieved incredible things over the years.

The pace of change and challenge requires dedicated and experienced professionals like myself and my board colleagues to fly the flag higher every year.

Q What's next for your business in the next 12 months and beyond?

I want to continue to nurture talent in our industry, including my own team.

I love mentoring and training, and I particularly enjoy delivering outcomes of the highest standards to our client base. My outlook for my business is to remain small and boutique, and to be the best.

Rental crisis worsens

as more investors exit the market

Australia's rental market is under mounting pressure as a record number of property investors exit the sector, driven by rising costs, legislative uncertainty, and concerns over proposed federal tax reforms.

By Nicola McDougall, Editor, PIPA Adviser

Australia's rental market is under mounting pressure as a record number of property investors exit the sector, driven by rising costs, legislative uncertainty, and concerns over proposed federal tax reforms.

The 2025 PIPA Annual Property Investor Sentiment Survey found that 16.7% of investors sold at least one property in the past year – up from 14.1% last year and 12.1% in 2023.

This marks the highest rate of investor sales since the question was first introduced in the survey in 2022, highlighting a clear and escalating trend that threatens rental housing supply nationwide.

When PIPA first asked the question in 2022, about 17% of investors indicated they had sold at least one investment property in the previous two years or 8.5% annually over the past two years.

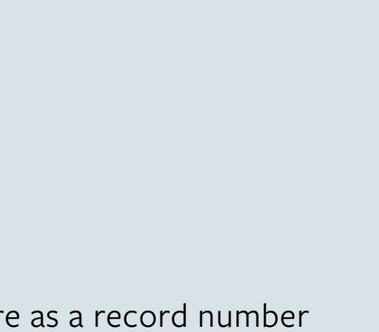
Rental stock shrinking fast

The survey found that only 42% of sold properties remained in the rental pool because they were bought by other investors.

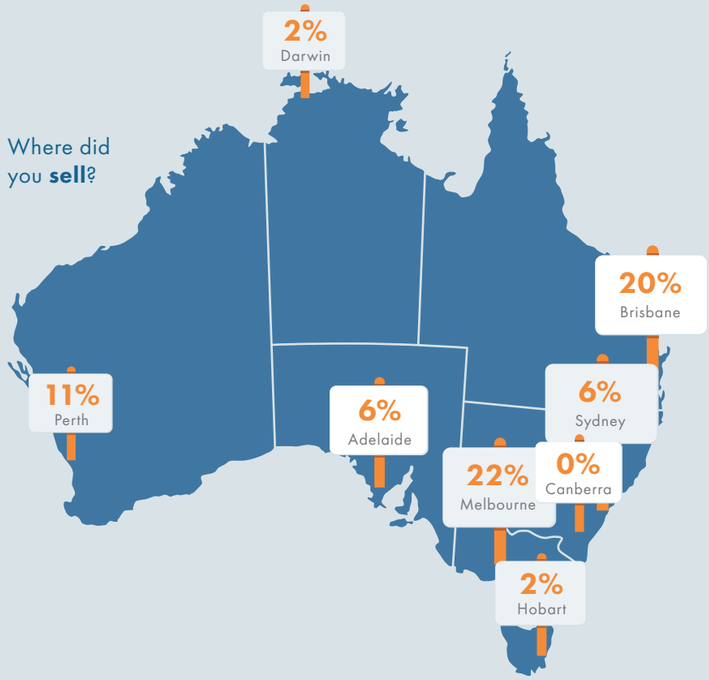
Meanwhile, 37% were purchased by owner-occupiers and 25% by first-home buyers.

The survey highlights a growing unease among investors, particularly around proposed federal reforms.

When asked whether they would continue investing in property if negative gearing was altered, 53% said they would stop investing. An additional 25% were unsure, leaving just 22% willing to continue under a revised negative gearing policy.



Similarly, if the CGT discount were reduced to 25% after 12 months of ownership, 35% of investors said they would exit the market. Another 29% remained undecided and 36% said they would continue investing under the revised CGT conditions.



State-by-State sales breakdown

Queensland continues to lead the nation in investor exits, with 35.5% of respondents selling at least one property in the state – up from 33.4% last year. Victoria followed closely at 30%, while New South Wales saw a sharp decline to 11.8%, down from 25.4% in 2024.

At city level, Melbourne saw an increase, with 22.1% of investors selling at least one property compared to 18.4% last year.

Brisbane followed closely at 19.7%, up from 16.3%. Perth entered the top three for the first time, with 11% of investors selling, while Sydney saw a notable decline to 6.3%, down from 14.9%.

Regional Queensland saw a particularly sharp rise, with 15.8% of investors selling, more than double the 7.6% recorded in 2024.

Victoria continues to see elevated levels of investor sales, and it's no coincidence. The combination of rising land tax, new vacancy levies, and ongoing tenancy reforms is creating a climate of uncertainty.

Many investors are simply deciding it's no longer worth the risk or the cost to hold property in the state.

Rising costs and legislative burden

The top reasons for selling in this year's survey included reducing overall debt exposure (41.7%), rising holding and compliance costs (40.4%), and increased land tax and government charges (32.9%). These figures are consistent with last year's findings but show a slight uptick in financial pressure.

Operational costs continue to climb. This year, 39% of investors reported increases of between 11% and 20%, compared to 34% last year. More than 21% said costs had risen by 21% to 41%, and 5% reported increases of 41% to 60%.

Despite these pressures, most investors are absorbing the costs. A full 65% said they had passed on just 10% or less of their increased costs through rent hikes – virtually unchanged from last year.

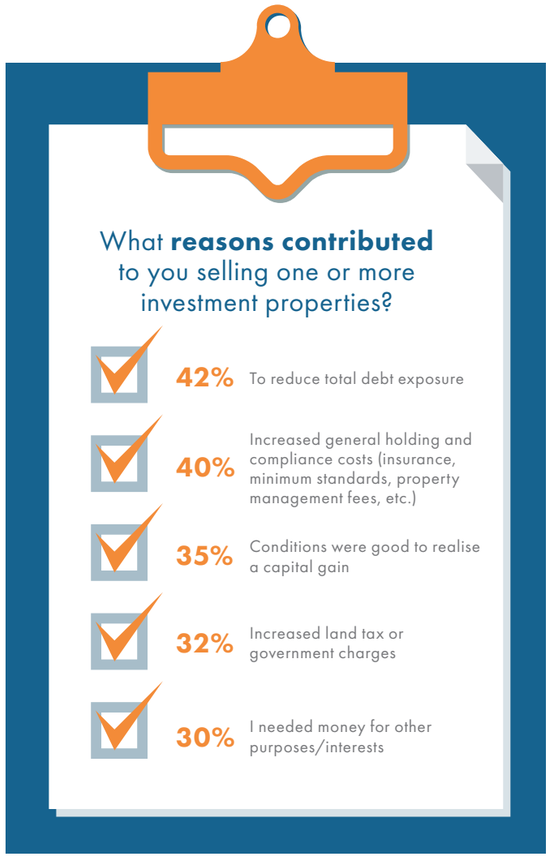
Policy confusion and communication gaps worsen

Investor awareness of state-level tenancy law reforms remains low. This year, 64% of investors were unaware of Victoria's new vacant residential land tax.

Additionally, 60% had only moderate or limited knowledge of tenancy law changes across Australia, and 10% said they had never received any communication from their state or territory government – unchanged from 2024.

It's clear that investors are being asked to navigate increasingly complex regulatory environments with little support or clarity.

If governments want to retain private rental providers, they need to do a better job of communicating policy changes and providing guidance.



> "Melbourne was named the **top investment destination**.

Selling pressure intensifies

Investor sentiment around selling is intensifying. This year, 36% of respondents said it was a good time to sell – up from 29% last year.

The top reasons for considering a sale in the next 12 to 24 months was the future risk of federal reforms (51.3%), followed by increased compliance costs (49.8%) and land tax and government charges (49.8%).

Concerns about rental freezes or caps rose to 37.1%, up from 32% last year, while worries about proposed tenancy legislation increased to 32.4%, compared to 28% in 2024.

These results reflect a broader unease among investors who feel they're being squeezed from all sides.

If this trend continues, we'll see even greater strain on the rental market, and tenants will bear the brunt.

A fragile optimism

Despite the challenges, nearly 60% of investors believe the next 12 months is a good time to invest in residential property – down slightly from 63% last year. This suggests a lingering belief in the long-term value of property investment, even as short-term pressures mount.

There's still belief in the fundamentals of property investment, but that belief is more fragile.

This means that if governments want to preserve the integrity of the rental market, they must listen to investors, provide clarity, and avoid knee-jerk reforms that risk doing more harm than good.

As Australia grapples with housing affordability and rental shortages, the voice of the investor has never been more critical.

Best locations to invest

Despite widespread uncertainty, investor interest remains strong in select markets.

Where is the **best place to invest** in Australia right now?

41% Melbourne	16% Brisbane	9% Perth	8% QLD - Regional	5% Adelaide	5% Sydney
5% NSW - Regional	4% VIC - Regional	2% Darwin	1% WA - Regional	1% Hobart	0% Canberra /ACT

Melbourne was named the top investment destination by 41% of respondents, up sharply from 26.3% last year.

This surge reflects renewed confidence in the city's long-term growth prospects and relative affordability compared to other capitals.

Brisbane held steady at 16.5%, supported by consistent rental demand and infrastructure investment.

Perth, while still attracting interest, saw a drop to 9.2% from 25.2%in 2023, suggesting many investors believe its growth cycle may be tapering.

Among regional areas, Queensland led with eight per cent of investor interest, followed by Regional NSW at 5.5% and Regional Victoria on 4.1%.

These areas are seen as offering strong rental yields, affordability, and lifestyle appeal, particularly for investors seeking alternatives to overheated metropolitan markets.

Support for professional standards remains strong

The survey also revealed continued support for professional standards in the property investment sector.

A resounding 94% of respondents believe that property investment advisors should have formal training or education – unchanged from last year.

Additionally, 85% said that PIPA membership and adherence to a code of conduct would positively influence their decision to work with a property professional.

It's increasingly apparent that professionalism matters – especially in complex markets like property investment – where investors need trusted advisors who understand the landscape and can help them navigate it.

That's why PIPA continues to advocate for higher standards and greater transparency across the industry.

The 2025 PIPA Annual Investor Sentiment Survey is available on the PIPA website via PIPA Annual Investor Sentiment Surveys Archives - Property Investment Professionals of Australia - PIPA

Investing in Yourself: Preventing Burnout in the Property Sector

If you work in the property sector, you know the pace rarely slows. The phone doesn't stop, clients' expectations grow higher each year, and market shifts demand constant vigilance.

Whether you're a buyer's agent, mortgage broker, property manager, or accountant, the profession is fast-moving, high-stakes, and deeply personal. You're managing investments that shape people's lives and livelihoods.

But there's one investment that too many professionals in the property sector overlook – the investment in themselves.

In my work supporting professionals across industries to prevent and recover from burnout, I see a recurring theme: property professionals are incredibly driven, client-focused, and resilient... until they're not.

The line between high performance and burnout can be a fine one, and in a sector where long hours and high expectations are often "just part of the job," it's easy to miss the warning signs until it's too late.

The high-performance Trap

The property industry attracts ambitious people. Many run their own businesses or operate in high-pressure roles where success is measured by results, settlements, commissions, portfolios, and growth. That's part of what makes this sector so dynamic and rewarding. But it's also what can make it dangerous from a well-being perspective.

When your livelihood and reputation depend on delivering for clients, there's a tendency to push through fatigue, skip rest, and prioritise work over recovery. The problem is that over time, this erodes your ability to perform at your best. The "always on" mindset becomes a normalised behaviour, masking the gradual build-up of chronic stress that leads to burnout.

Burnout isn't a badge of honour. It's the body and brain's way of saying, "I can't sustain this pace." Yet, because many property professionals equate slowing down with weakness or loss of momentum, they often ignore or rationalise the signs.

Recognising the early signs

Burnout doesn't happen overnight; it seeps into your life at the same time that you are actively ignoring the signs and symptoms your body is sending you to slow down. Some of the early indicators include:

- Persistent fatigue or low energy, even after rest
- Feeling detached or cynical about clients or work
- Reduced focus or forgetfulness
- Irritability or emotional volatility
- A loss of enthusiasm for work you once loved

If those sound familiar, you're not alone. I've spoken with countless property professionals who say, "I thought it was just stress," or "I'll slow down after the next deal closes." But the truth is, burnout prevention starts before you hit breaking point.

Your most valuable asset

In property, we talk about assets, returns, and long-term growth. The same logic applies to your well-being. Your energy, focus, creativity, and resilience are your most valuable business assets. Without them, performance drops, relationships suffer, and your business – and life – feel harder than they should.

I like to ask clients: *If your health and well-being were part of your investment portfolio, would you consider them an appreciating or depreciating asset?*

It's a confronting question, and an important one. When you treat your well-being as a professional investment, you begin to make different choices. You start seeing self-care not as indulgence, but as maintenance of the most critical system you have, you.

Practical strategies for sustainable performance

Here are a few evidence-based strategies that can help property professionals protect their well-being and sustain high performance over the long term:

1. Set clear boundaries

Boundaries are essential in a client-facing industry. Communicate your availability clearly and stick to it. You teach people how to treat you. If you respond to every message at 9pm, they'll keep messaging at 9pm.

2. Redefine productivity

True productivity isn't about doing more – it's about doing what matters most, efficiently. Prioritise tasks that drive meaningful results and delegate or drop what doesn't.

> "It's about working ***smarter and more sustainably.***

3. Schedule recovery like an appointment

Rest and recovery are not luxuries. They are performance enhancers. Book time in your calendar for exercise, mindfulness, or simply downtime, and treat it as non-negotiable.

4. Cultivate connection

Working in isolation, especially as a small business owner, amplifies stress. Make time for genuine human connection, whether through industry peers, mentors, or a wellbeing coach.

5. Reflect, don't just react

Start or end your day with a brief check-in: *How am I feeling physically, mentally, and emotionally?* Awareness is the first step in preventing burnout.

The leadership opportunity

For those leading teams or mentoring others, the way you model wellbeing matters. Your team takes its cues from you. If you work through illness, skip holidays, or glorify long hours, you're unintentionally setting that as the cultural standard.

Creating an environment that supports sustainable performance through psychological safety, realistic workloads, and open conversations about well-being. This isn't just good for people – it's good for business. Teams that feel supported are more engaged, loyal, and productive.

The ROI of self-investment

Preventing burnout isn't about working less – it's about working smarter and more sustainably. When you invest in your well-being, you enhance your capacity to make clear decisions, manage stress, and maintain perspective.

You wouldn't advise a client to neglect maintenance on an investment property, so the same principle applies to you. Protecting your well-being safeguards your most important investment of all: your ability to show up, perform, and thrive long term.

As the property landscape continues to evolve, resilience and adaptability will be the real markers of success. That starts with deciding to invest in yourself. NOW.

Sally McGrath is a health coach, keynote speaker, and burnout prevention specialist. Through her business, Health That Heals, she helps individuals and leaders create sustainable performance by developing strategies to build work and life synergy.

To discuss how you can strengthen wellbeing in yourself, your business or your team, visit www.healththatheals.com.au or connect with Sally on LinkedIn.

Rate cuts and incentives ignite property surge across Australia

Australia's property markets are entering a new phase of cautious optimism and regionally diverse momentum as 2025 unfolds.

Following a period of interest rate cuts and the rollout of enhanced government incentives, buyer confidence is returning across the country.

While affordability remains a key constraint, especially in capital cities, lifestyle appeal, infrastructure investment, and structural undersupply are driving renewed activity in both metropolitan and regional areas.

In New South Wales, Sydney's market is showing signs of a measured recovery, with dwelling values rising 4.2% since the February rate cut. Demand is strongest in affordable, family-friendly areas like St Marys and Mount Druitt, while regional centres such as Newcastle and the Hunter Valley continue to benefit from lifestyle migration and infrastructure improvements. The expansion of the First Home Guarantee scheme is expected to further stimulate demand, particularly in middle-ring suburbs.

Victoria's property landscape is underpinned by a rebound in buyer activity, especially in Melbourne's outer suburbs where competition is fierce in the sub-$950,000 bracket. While overall values remain slightly below their 2022 peak, momentum is building across price segments, with mid-market homes gaining traction. Regional Victoria continues to attract buyers with its affordability and long-term growth, supported by strong fundamentals and digital accessibility for interstate investors.

Queensland is experiencing a surge in buyer activity, particularly in southeast regions like Ipswich and Toowoomba, where open homes are drawing large crowds and properties are selling rapidly, often above asking price. The enhanced First Home Guarantee has reactivated sidelined buyers, intensifying competition in entry-level markets. Despite new seller disclosure requirements initially slowing listings, the market is now adjusting, with well-prepared buyers best positioned to succeed.

Western Australia's Perth market remains one of the nation's strongest, underpinned by population growth, a resilient economy, and government-backed deposit schemes. With listings at historic lows and land sales surging, upward price pressure is expected to build. Meanwhile, Adelaide continues its remarkable run, with sales volumes and prices climbing steadily, particularly in affordable northern suburbs and lifestyle-driven regional hubs like Victor Harbor and Moonta Bay.

Tasmania and the ACT are also showing renewed strength. Tasmania's market has been reinvigorated by the 5% deposit scheme and major renewable infrastructure projects, while Canberra is stabilising after a quieter 2024, with moderate growth forecast into 2026.

Across the board, the national property outlook is one of steady, sustainable growth – shaped by affordability, infrastructure, and the enduring appeal of lifestyle-led living.

Ipswich

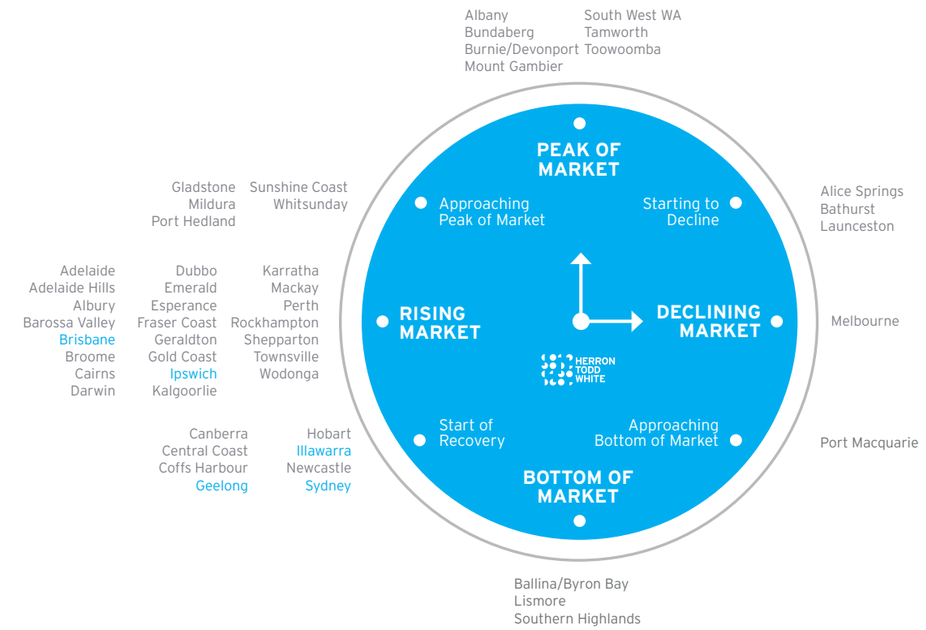
Source: realestate.com.au

National Property Clock: *Houses*

Entries coloured orange indicate positional change from last month.

National Property Clock: *Units*

Entries coloured blue indicate positional change from last month.



NSW

Michael Safar
Director & QPIA, SAFORE

> Tight **stock levels** persist.

The New South Wales property market has entered a period of steady adjustment in 2025, shaped by affordability pressures, lifestyle-driven demand, and renewed confidence following recent rate cuts.

Across Sydney and key regional centres, activity is rebuilding as low vacancy rates, resilient demand, and supportive policy settings form the foundation for measured growth.

Sydney's market continues to recalibrate, with selective demand driving activity across distinct pockets. Since the first rate cut in February, dwelling values have risen by around 4.2 per cent, reflecting a measured recovery supported by renewed confidence and tight supply.

Demand remains strongest for quality, well-located homes near established amenities and lifestyle centres, while affordability continues to shape buyer behaviour and temper activity in higher-value markets.

Among Sydney's top-performing SA3 regions, St Marys and Mount Druitt each recorded annual growth of about 7.5 per cent, underscoring the strength of family-oriented, affordable precincts.

With subdued construction and fewer new listings, tight stock levels persist. This imbalance, combined with persistently low rental vacancies, points to ongoing structural challenges that will require time and coordinated policy effort to resolve.

Beyond the capital, regional NSW continues to evolve as a lifestyle-led market. Enhanced transport links, local job growth, and affordability are attracting new residents seeking balance beyond Sydney.

Vacancy rates in centres such as Newcastle, Wollongong, and the Central Coast remain below one per cent, reflecting strong demand and limited supply. Hunter Valley and Tamworth again rank among the state's top-performing SA3 regions for annual value growth, reinforcing their role as consistent performers in a more stable regional cycle.

Migration, infrastructure, and affordability are shaping regional markets less by short-term momentum and more by long-term fundamentals.

Recent policy shifts have added new dynamics to the market. The expansion of the First Home Guarantee price caps from 1 October 2025, now $1.5 million in Sydney and major regional centres and $800,000 in other NSW areas, has widened access for first-home buyers. While this may stimulate demand in Sydney's middle-ring and growth-corridor suburbs, affordability remains a defining challenge as population growth and limited new housing continue to outpace supply.

Looking ahead, NSW's property market appears positioned for steady, sustainable growth through 2026, supported by confidence, infrastructure investment, and the lasting appeal of lifestyle and liveability.

For investors, success will lie in aligning strategy with enduring long-term fundamentals and targeting markets underpinned by affordability, employment access, and constrained supply.

Mount Druitt — Source: realestate.com.au

VIC

Dr Jenny Jia
Director & QPIA, JL Property Buyers Agent

Toorak — Source: realestate.com.au

According to Cotality data as of 1 October, Melbourne's dwelling values remain 2.7% below its 2022 peak. However, headline numbers such as these often disguise the diversity of market conditions across the city.

Although prices are still below the previous high, the market has been gradually regaining momentum since early this year. With three rate cuts improving borrowing power, more buyers have returned to the market with improved sentiments. The early rollout of the First Home Guarantee has also added momentum.

In Melbourne's outer east, northeast, and northwest, activity has been particularly strong. Many properties are selling before being listed, or during the first week of a campaign, or ahead of auction, with both clearance rates and sale premiums rising, reflecting a clear seller's market. Over the past five years, prices in some of these areas have climbed by 30% to 50%.

In the sub-$950,000 range, competition is intense between first home buyers and investors, including a growing share of interstate purchasers. The wider use of online inspections and digital property-matching tools has made cross-state buying far easier.

Even so, investors need to understand the context behind data rather than simply assuming past growth will continue and be cautious of herd behaviour that can lead to sudden price surges. Markets dominated by investors tend to be more volatile as their decisions are often more sensitive to interest rate changes and short-term conditions than those of owner-occupiers.

> Be cautious of **herd behaviour**.

Momentum is now shifting upward from the entry level to the mid-market. Activity has strengthened, notably below the $2 million mark, and competition has become more widespread.

In the $3 million to $6 million segment, conditions are stable, suggesting a market that remains broadly balanced yet leans slightly towards sellers.

At the top end, particularly in Toorak, turnover remains subdued — reflecting both the limited supply of quality properties and the impact of recent changes to investment migration policies on buyer demand.

Over the past 12 months, the number of detached house sales has fallen to roughly half the level recorded a decade ago. Yet, when top-tier homes do come to market, competition is still fierce.

The unit sector continues to recover more slowly than the detached housing market, which is a typical pattern in price cycles where premium assets tend to lead in both timing and magnitude of growth.

In regional Victoria, activity remains firm thanks to pricing and resultant affordability advantages. While the regional dwelling values are still 4.6% below its 2022 peak, long-term growth has been impressive: up 34.8% over five years and 3.2% in the past year, supported by ongoing affordability and lifestyle demand.

All in all, Victoria's property market is full of opportunity. Among the capital cities, Melbourne's relatively strong value stands out clearly. In recent years, as many investors have stepped back and more owner-occupiers have entered the market, its foundations have become stronger and more stable. Regardless of how interest rate cuts unfold, Victoria appears well-positioned to remain on the radar of long-term investors.

QLD

Melinda Granzien
Director, Buyers Agent & QPIA,
Precision Property Buyers Agency


Toowoomba
Source: realestate.com.au

Buyer activity has accelerated across Southeast Queensland in recent weeks, coinciding with the launch of the new First Home Buyer incentives on 1 October.

Open homes in our local regions such as Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba, and the Scenic Rim are drawing 30 to 40 groups at a time, with many properties attracting multiple offers and selling quickly.

In some cases, buyers are even submitting offers sight unseen in an attempt to secure a property in these highly competitive conditions.

Agents are being inundated with enquiry, which is making it increasingly difficult for genuine buyers to have their questions answered or to view properties in detail. For this reason, we are inspecting properties outside of open homes wherever possible to ensure our clients can complete thorough due diligence before making a decision.

The introduction of the enhanced First Home Guarantee package has sparked a noticeable increase in enquiry, particularly in the entry-level market where properties fall within the eligibility thresholds.

Many buyers who had been sitting on the sidelines are now stepping into the market with more confidence. While this is positive for first-time buyers, the flow-on effect is tighter competition and additional upward pressure on prices in already competitive markets.

Well-presented homes are attracting the strongest demand, with price growth continuing month-on-month. Buyers are often offering well above market value and significantly over the list price — sometimes $50,000 to $100,000 more — just to secure a property. Agents are commenting that they "cannot believe" the prices being achieved, with many properties selling after just one open home and minimal marketing. Multiple offers well above asking price are now the norm!

> "Buyers are even submitting offers **sight unseen**.

Looking ahead, buyer activity is expected to increase even further as more first home buyers take advantage of the new incentives, adding to competition not only among first-time purchasers but also among investors and upgraders competing in the same price brackets.

Initially, the introduction of the new seller disclosure requirements (Form 2) caused delays in listings and contract signings, but we are now seeing more vendors actively completing this disclosure before going to market — a positive shift that is helping to streamline the process.

With demand showing no signs of easing, buyers who act decisively and are well-prepared will be best placed to succeed in this fast-moving market. However, regardless of how strong or 'clean' an offer may be in terms of conditions, vendors are ultimately being influenced by price.

In the current climate, the highest offer — not necessarily the most favourable terms — is often what secures the property.

TAS

Sam Spilsbury,
Director, Buyers Agents Tasmania

> “Investors are also **re-emergin**g.

Tasmania’s property market has been showing a steady pulse through 2025. Statewide house sales lifted 11% for the quarter, up 3.5% year-on-year, while the median house price held firm at $610,000, sitting 1.7% higher than a year ago.

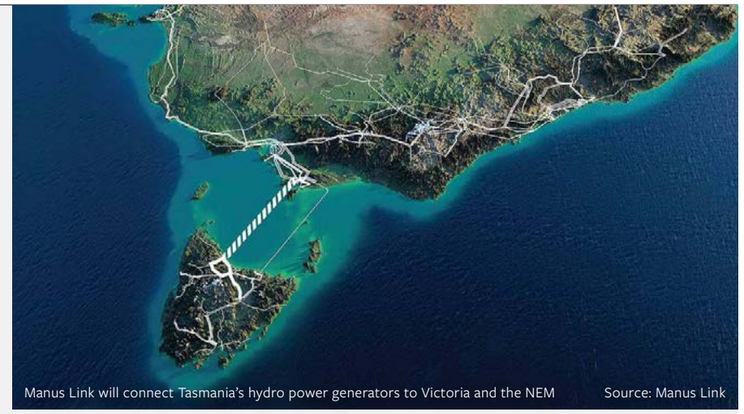
Since the 5% deposit scheme came into effect on 1 October, capped at $600,000 in Hobart and $550,000 across the rest of Tasmania, activity has spiked dramatically.

Properties in this bracket are drawing 30 or more groups through open homes and attracting up to 15 offers — reminiscent of the competitive conditions of 2021–22. Many of these buyers are first-home purchasers, eager to take advantage of the scheme before limited allocations are filled, adding urgency to the market.

Investors are also re-emerging, particularly in the North-West and outer Hobart suburbs, where yields remain among the most attractive in the country. The statewide median rent increased 4.2% for houses and 5% for units year-on-year, with the median rental now sitting at $495 per week for houses and $420 for other dwellings. With vacancy rates still tight, investors are finding renewed confidence in stable rental performance and improving buyer sentiment.

Beyond market fundamentals, Tasmania’s infrastructure pipeline is expanding rapidly, reinforcing long-term growth confidence. In October 2025, the State Government welcomed a $2 billion investment by Gamuda to deliver two major renewable projects — the Cellars Hill Wind Farm and Weasel Solar Farm in the Central Highlands. Combined, these projects will deliver 600 MW of renewable energy, creating local jobs and anchoring regional economic activity.

Similarly, the Project Marinus interconnector, advanced under a landmark agreement in August 2025, will link Tasmania’s clean energy supply to mainland Australia. This next-generation infrastructure not only boosts energy reliability and export potential but also supports population and business growth — both key drivers for sustained housing demand.



Manus Link will connect Tasmania’s hydro power generators to Victoria and the NEM Source: Manus Link

While Tasmania’s median prices have largely plateaued after several years of rapid escalation, this current phase feels more sustainable — driven by local confidence, gradual population growth, infrastructure investment, and a renewed sense of opportunity among both owner-occupiers and investors.

If early-spring activity is any indication, the state is heading into a competitive summer. Tasmania’s “second wind” appears to have arrived — and for many buyers, timing and preparation will again be everything.

WA

Andrew Black
Director & QPIA, Fundamental Invest

The Perth property market is experiencing robust growth, further fuelled by the Federal Government’s recent 5% deposit scheme, which eliminates Lenders Mortgage Insurance (LMI). This initiative has intensified demand in a market already facing significant constraints.

Recent data from the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia reveals that only 2,779 properties are listed for sale, comprising 1,725 houses, 636 units, and 418 blocks of land. This marks a 6% decrease from four weeks ago when there were 2,941 properties available. Notably, this time last year, Perth had 65% more properties for sale, totalling 4,588. For context, a balanced market in Perth typically features 12,000 to 13,000 properties for sale – levels not seen since 2019.

For the third consecutive year, Perth has recorded the highest percentage population increase in Australia, driven by a thriving economy, particularly in the mining sector. Strong commodity prices continue to generate numerous opportunities, attracting workers from across the nation and internationally.

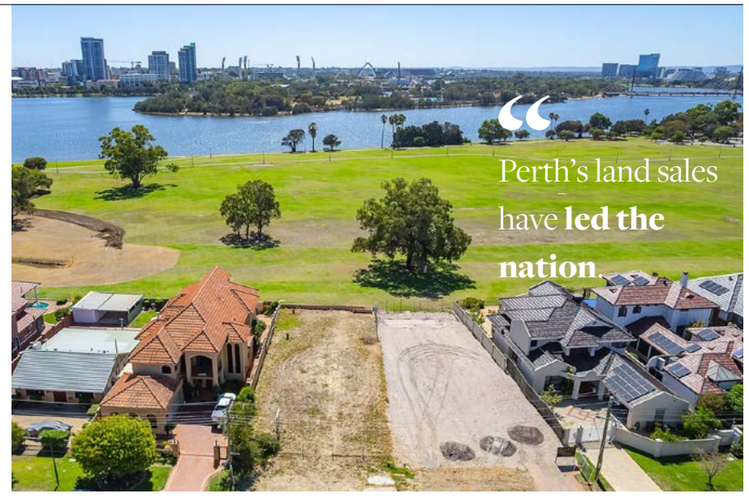
The rental vacancy rate in the metro area appears to have stabilised at 2.1%, up from 1.6% a year ago and less than 1% two years prior. However, some regional centres are facing critically low rental stock levels, with several key areas reporting vacancies below 1%.

Perth’s land sales have led the nation, achieving a near-record quarter with a remarkable 45% increase in sales year on year. Despite this surge in activity, prices have remained stable, although approximately 35% of trading estates currently have no available stock. This pent-up demand is likely to result in upward price movements in future releases.

Recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) indicates that Western Australia is leading the nation with a 25% year-on-year increase in housing starts, alongside a steady pace of completions.

This is a significant outcome for an industry that has faced considerable pressure. While detached dwellings are seeing strong starts, higher construction costs have subdued activity in the apartment sector, which remains concentrated in premium areas where feasibility is more favourable.

Builders who have effectively managed their project pipelines are well-positioned to capitalise on the sustained strong demand over the next two to three years and beyond.



In particular, Defence Housing contracts have garnered significant interest from investors, following recent announcements from the State and Federal Governments regarding the AUSKUS base slated for Perth.

Overall, the outlook remains very positive for Perth and key regional centres.

SA

Terry Ryder
Director, Hotspotting

> Adelaide **continues to rise**.

The Adelaide market continues to defy gravity and remains one of the nation's sturdiest property markets.

Our analysis shows that total residential sales in the latest quarter represented a 19% rise on the previous quarter – and were 24% higher than the same period in 2024.

After five years of notable growth in activity and prices, Adelaide continues to rise. The latest price data shows the median house price is 9% higher than a year ago and the median unit price has grown 10% – close to the best in the nation.

The price growth has occurred in response to continuing strong sales activity across the Adelaide market.

Quarterly sales across Greater Adelaide in the past 18 months have been steadily rising – with over 8,400 sales in the latest quarter, compared 6,700 a year ago.

The affordable northern suburbs have been very much at the forefront of the Adelaide boom and the LGAs of Playford and Salisbury remain prominent.

Of the 19 markets in Playford, 15 have positive trends and sales activity continues to rise, led by Elizabeth Downs, Elizabeth North, Munno Para West, Blakeview and Davoren Park. Neighbouring Salisbury is also busy, led by suburbs with rising sales activity including Ingle Farm, Valley View, Salisbury North, Parafield Gardens and Mawson Lakes.

The Tea Tree Gully LGA continues to excel – quarterly sales over the past 18 months have risen from below 300 to almost 500 – led by rising markets such as Dernancourt, Fairview Park and Greenwith.

The Port Adelaide Enfield LGA is particularly strong at the moment – 20 of the 29 markets in our recent analysis have positive trends with their sales activity and total sales for the LGA rose 34% in the latest quarter. Leading suburbs include Klemzig, Lightsview and Enfield.

Regional South Australia delivered a 12% year-on-year increase in sales, with 58% of its markets now on the rise.

Quarterly volumes have held near their December 2024 peak, reinforcing a steady recovery.

Alexandrina and Victor Harbor LGAs remain solid performers, while the Copper Coast's Moonta Bay and Wallaroo have emerged as rising hotspots. Port Pirie is also notable for its low-price, high-yield profile.

Moonta Bay's and Wallaroo's surging sales illustrate how lifestyle-driven coastal markets can outpace traditional regional centres.

Port Pirie's affordability is also continuing to attract yield-focused investors.

Victor Harbor — Source: realestate.com.au

ACT

Brady Yoshia
Founder & CEO, Brady Marcs Buyers Advisory

> A phase of renewed **stability and cautious optimism**.

The ACT property market is entering a phase of renewed stability and cautious optimism as it moves through 2025. Following a subdued 2024, early signs point to a market regaining balance between buyers and sellers. Auction clearance rates have steadied, and supply levels are holding firm, creating a more predictable environment for both sides of the market.

Affordability remains a key concern, yet recent interest rate adjustments and a rise in listings have improved conditions for buyers. According to CoreLogic, the ACT recorded 743 new residential listings in September 2025, reflecting an active spring market and moderate increase in stock. Buyer confidence is particularly strong in the mid-tier price range, where demand continues to exceed supply.

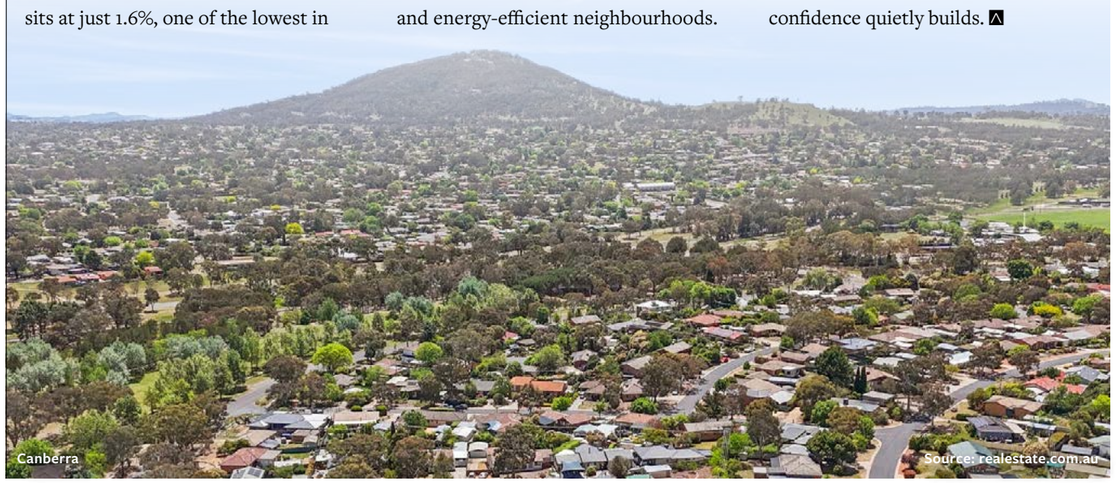
Canberra's rental vacancy rate sits at just 1.6%, one of the lowest in the country. Despite an increase in available rental stock over the past year, strong population growth and a steady employment base, particularly within the public sector and education continue to drive demand. Investors are, however, navigating a more regulated environment, with new compliance and rental reforms aimed at strengthening tenant protections.

After a mild dip through 2024, Canberra's median dwelling values are now stabilising. The outlook for late 2025 suggests prices will level out across most suburbs, with moderate growth in well-connected and energy-efficient neighbourhoods. Well-presented homes and townhouses remain competitive, while apartments in outer areas require sharper pricing to attract buyers.

Looking ahead, steady migration, infrastructure investment, and a resilient local economy are set to underpin growth into 2026.

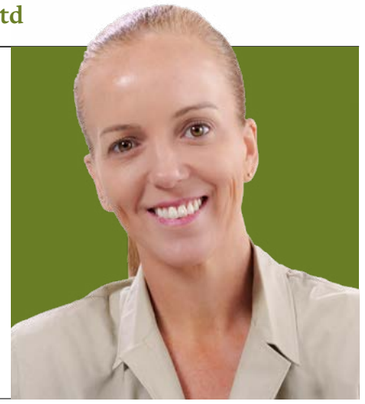
The market is likely to remain stable with moderate growth in the last quarter of 2025. Sellers who price strategically can capture renewed activity, while buyers benefit from rate relief and government incentives such as the 5% Deposit Scheme. These factors collectively support an anticipated 3% to 5% growth through 2025–2026.

As 2025 draws to a close, Canberra continues to demonstrate the stability that makes it one of Australia's most dependable residential markets. It's a city where quality listings perform well, rental demand remains firm, and confidence quietly builds.



Canberra — Source: realestate.com.au

AI and Technology: The quiet enablers of business success



In a world where industries evolve faster than regulation can catch up, one truth has become impossible to ignore, technology isn't replacing professionals, it's releasing them.

From buyers' agents and brokers to accountants and developers, today's property investment professionals are balancing more than just deals. They're managing marketing, compliance, lead generation, client nurturing, and data - all while trying to stay ahead of market cycles and regulatory reform.

The real problem isn't a lack of opportunity; it's a lack of time, talent, and trust.

Time, talent and trust: The three hidden costs

Property professionals consistently name one pain point above all: time.

Every hour spent chasing signatures, managing databases, or handling routine admin is an hour lost from what truly drives value – building relationships, giving advice, and growing business.

Then there's the talent challenge. Replacing skilled people is costly and time-consuming, and many business owners struggle to maintain consistency across growing teams.

Finally, there's the trust gap! That hesitation around handing over processes to technology. It's understandable, but it's also holding many back. The truth is, the future of trust in our industry will depend on how intelligently we use technology, not whether we avoid it.

The question every leader should ask: Where does AI fit?

Artificial intelligence (AI) has gone from buzzword to backbone, yet most professionals are still unsure where to start.

> "Technology isn't **replacing professionals**.

The answer? Start small but start smart.

AI is not about grand digital overhauls; it's about micro-enablement! Small, intentional actions that save time, enhance accuracy, and improve client outcomes.

For example, an AI-driven CRM can identify when to follow up with a client, generate property insights instantly, or suggest the next best step for each prospect.

For mortgage brokers, it might provide a first layer of loan approval predication risks or automate communications. For accountants, it might reconcile transactions or flag anomalies before they become issues.

AI doesn't replace professionals, it amplifies them.

The mindset shift: From tool to teammate

The most profound change comes not from the software itself, but from the mindset behind it.

AI isn't a "tool." It's a teammate.

It's the assistant who never forgets, the analyst who never sleeps, and the strategist who can see data trends you can't. It allows human intelligence to focus on connection, creativity, and client care, the qualities that no algorithm can replicate.

This is the foundation of what I call Agent 3.0! A future where technology works with professionals, not instead of them.

A real example: Building the WayScape ecosystem

When I founded WayScape, my vision wasn't just to build another platform, it was to create a connected ecosystem that simplifies how property professionals work, collaborate, and grow.

WayScape brings together six integrated products that enable the modern real estate professional:

- **Effortless operations, better results:** a CRM tailored to real estate and investment workflows, centralising client, property, and deal management.
- **Smarter insights for smarter decisions:** an AI-powered assistant that learns and guides agents in real time, automating tasks and insights.
- **Empowering agents to excel:** a professional development and coaching platform to upskill and mentor agents across the country.
- **Every task, done right – on time:** an on-demand service network connecting professionals with field photographers, videographers, admin support and in future, and looking ahead, any service related to the real estate industry.
- **Conversations that convert, automatically:** an AI telephony and messaging assistant managing client communications and follow-ups, social media platforms, review platforms and much more, multilingual.
- **Access before the market knows:** a national off-market and pre-market property portal connecting buyers and sellers ahead of the mainstream market.

Each of these pillars is designed to solve one core problem: the time poverty that constrains business growth. Together, they form an ecosystem where human and digital intelligence operate in unison.

AI isn't about replacing people — it's about returning time to them. That's the real revolution.

The Future: Co-creation, not competition

The AI revolution isn't about machines outsmarting humans; it's about humans co-creating with machines.

The property professionals who will thrive in the coming decade are those who:

- Treat AI as a strategic partner, not a passing trend.
- Integrate automation to scale personal service, not replace it.
- Build client confidence through transparency, not fear of change.

Technology will never replace empathy or intuition, but it can remove the noise that prevents us from using them effectively.

The takeaway: Start small, think big

For every selling agent, buyers' agent, broker, or accountant wondering where to begin, the path is simple: pick one process that slows you down and ask, "Can this be smarter?"

Automate a single client follow-up sequence. Let your CRM provide insights instead of reports. Teach your team to embrace tech as a helper, not a hurdle.

The difference between where your business is and where it could be might just be one automation away.

AI isn't the future – it's the present, unfolding one decision at a time..

Rebecca Moroney is the Founder & CEO of WayScape Pty Ltd, a leading Australian PropTech company pioneering the world's first fully integrated AI ecosystem for real estate professionals. With a background in corporate leadership and business transformation, Rebecca's mission is to empower agents and businesses to work smarter, faster, and more humanly through intelligent technology.

Source: Mick Tsikas/AAP

Australian parents are helping their kids buy a first home with less money, but more rent-free living

As many young Australians struggle to enter the housing market, research shows the "bank of mum and dad" is often called on to help. But what kind of financial support are parents willing to offer their kids? And how has that changed over time? That's what our recent survey of 1,725 Australian parents – mostly aged 45 to 64 – sought to find out.

Despite the growing body of research showing young people's reliance on their parents to help buy their first home, we still don't know enough about how parents are helping their children.

This includes how much parents are dipping into their own pockets to fund this assistance, and what the financial implications might be for parents who do so.

Earlier this year, we sought to find out more using Qualtrics, an online platform used for survey research. Of the 1,725 parents who responded to our survey, 61% were aged 45-64, while 34% were 65-69, and 5% were under 45.

We started by asking if they had done anything to help at least one of their three eldest kids buy their first home.

More than half of the 1,725 respondents – or 994 parents – said yes, they had helped at least one of their kids.

Of those whose children bought more than ten years ago, 44% had helped.

If their children bought within five to ten years ago, 50% had helped.

And if their children had bought within the past five years, an even higher share – 58% – had helped their children buy their first home.

(Note: some parents surveyed helped multiple children in different time periods.)

This article was originally published on

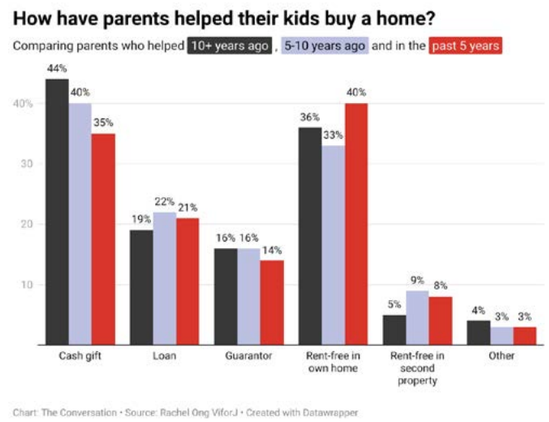
THE CONVERSATION

Read the article

Rent-free living overtakes gifts

Our survey found living rent-free in the family home has become the number one way parents helped in the past five years.

Cash gifts are still crucial, but less common than a decade ago.



> More than half of the 1,725 respondents – or 994 parents – **said yes, they had helped at least one of their kids**.

These findings are part of a wider, yet-to-be published study of parents' attitudes and motivations on assisting their children into homeownership. They offer timely insights into how families are responding to one of the biggest challenges facing young people: unaffordable housing leading to declining homeownership rates.

Our study sample was not designed to be nationally representative of all Australian parents, as our primary interest was in those who've helped children buy their first home. However, quotas were applied on income, region and ethnicity to ensure sufficiently diverse representation.

Broader trends emerging over time

Looking at all 994 parents who said they'd helped at least one of their children buy a home over the past decade or more, some longer-term trends emerged.

Over the past ten or more years, around one in five children (22%) of the parents we surveyed received more than one type of help. The most common combinations paired direct help – gifts, loans, guarantorship – with rent-free living.

Both homeowning and renting parents said they had helped their children. But homeowning parents were more likely to assist in financial resource-intensive ways, such as cash gifts and loans, while renting parents tended to help in other ways, such as letting children live at home rent-free.

The use of loans rose sharply with parental income, spiking to 41% among those with parental incomes above $200,000.

Children of higher-income parents were also more likely to benefit from rent-free accommodation in their parents' second or investment home. This is a distinct advantage, as this support is likely to more than double the odds of private renters of becoming homeowners.

The survey also explored where the money comes from when parents provide financial gifts or loans.

The majority (78%) of parents who offered cash gifts over the past decade or more drew on their savings.

Among those who offered loans, a much smaller share (46%) drew from savings; nearly one in three (29%) drew down on their own home equity; while another 12% drew equity from a second property.

A few parents went further

Thirty-six parents surveyed reported taking "other" measures to help their children access homeownership. Seven (19%) said they had co-purchased homes with their children, or entered into loans as co-borrowers using their own home as collateral.

Three (8%) said they had signed their house or another property over entirely to their children.

Another three (8%) gave their children early inheritances, passing on intergenerational wealth earlier than usual.

> Aside from the potential financial burden, the lack of legal protections for the "bank of mum and dad" **expose older Australians to the risk of financial abuse**.

> Parents giving cash gifts or loans are **drawing down from multiple sources of assets**, including their own savings, home equity and superannuation.

An entrenched wealth divide

The benefits of parental homeownership are now transmitted across generations. Parents giving cash gifts or loans are drawing down from multiple sources of assets, including their own savings, home equity and superannuation.

Homeowning and higher-income parents are better resourced to assist their children through cash gifts and loans, but these are not risk-free. Aside from the potential financial burden, the lack of legal protections for the "bank of mum and dad" expose older Australians to the risk of financial abuse.

Finally, significant numbers of young people do not have well-resourced parents who can support their homeownership aspirations. As the importance of parental assistance grows, this will widen an intra-generational housing wealth gap between young people with and without access to the bank of mum and dad.

Rachel Ong ViforJ
John Curtin Distinguished Professor & ARC Future Fellow, Curtin University
Amity James
Associate Professor and Discipline Lead Property, Curtin University
Christopher Phelps
Research Fellow, School of Accounting, Economics and Finance, Curtin University
Paul Vivian
PhD Candidate, School of Accounting, Economics & Finance, Curtin University

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